

# Instructor Handout - Ascend Weekend

## Notes:

- Ascending students are to be backed up with a top rope belay.
- All students should perform safety checks and use the full set of calls.
- Be patient with students as they often tire quickly, particularly if knots are slipping. Be prepared to get them off the ascent when this happens.
- **Make sure to send your students to catch the bucket at some point during the morning.**
- Program Rules are on the back of this sheet or in a separate handout.

## Suggested agenda:

- 1. Have students build a SERENE anchor appropriate for ascending as a group**
  - a. Stress the need to protect the rope over the edge (use the gear bag for this).
- 2. Describe situations in which ascending might be needed:**
  - a. Rappel rope doesn't reach the ground,
  - b. Missed the next rappel anchor.
  - c. Can't follow a route,
  - d. Fell on an overhang and can't get back to the rock,
- 3. Explain that ascending is a last resort when seconding – try other options first:**
  - a. Look around for handholds/ footholds that they may have missed.
  - b. Pull or stand on gear (French free), potentially by using a sling as a loop.
  - c. Place some gear to pull on.
  - d. Pull on the rope (or attach a sling/cord with a friction hitch).
- 4. Demonstrate ascending setup and technique**
  - a. Demonstrate the friction hitches (Klemheist, Bachmann).
  - b. Demonstrate the ascending setup.
  - c. Demonstrate moving past a ledge by retying the foot loop above the ledge.
  - d. Explain the reason for backup knots and demonstrate their use in ascending.
- 5. Stuck Climber Ascend**
  - a. Students start dangling from a fixed rope by a tie-in knot on their harness.
  - b. Rig to ascend with a prusik cord for the waist loop and a sling for the foot loop.
  - c. The foot loop may need to be above the waist loop initially to get away from the tie-in knot after which it can be moved back below the waist loop.
  - d. Ascend to the top, past an overhang, tying into backup knots along the way.
  - e. The overhang can be passed by retying the foot loop above the ledge. The foot loop can be moved back below the waist loop after passing the ledge.
- 6. Stuck Rappel Ascend (Rappel-Ascend Transition)**
  - a. Each student should rappel (extended, autoblock backup), stop part way down, and use a locker to connect to a backup knot on a bight of the rappel line.
  - b. Rig to ascend with a prusik cord for the waist loop and a sling for the foot loop, one or both of these must be above the rappel device in order to remove it.
  - c. Ascend to the top, tying into backup knots along the way.
- 7. Other skills (can be done by an assistant with students not belaying/climbing)**
  - a. Each student ties/demonstrates today's knots
- 8. [Time permitting] There may be a station for trying mechanical ascenders**